

## **ACS NEWSLETTER MARCH – MAY 2012**

### **ACS Now on Facebook!**

American Citizen Services (ACS) now has a Facebook page! This is a great way for you to communicate directly with the community of U.S. citizens living in or visiting India, those planning to do so or just for those who have an interest in ACS issues related to India. The site will feature warden messages, travel alerts, emergency messages, voting and tax information, news articles and internet links, and features on the many services ACS offers. Now through the ACS Facebook page you can provide feedback on content, ask questions, and engage in discussion with other users.

Here is the link to the page: <http://www.facebook.com/AmericanCitizenServicesIndia>.

“Like Us” and tell your family and friends to do so as well!

### **Town Hall Meeting with ACS on Friday, May 11<sup>th</sup> 6pm-7:30 pm IST**

The ACS Unit at the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi will be hosting a Town Hall for American Citizens on Friday, May 11th from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Embassy Consular Section in Chanakyapuri.

This is an opportunity for U.S. Citizens to learn more about their Embassy, its mission, and how it can assist Americans in India. Embassy representatives will address areas of interest including security, health, voting, and services available for U.S. Citizens at the Embassy.

If you are an American citizen or a parent accompanying a minor American citizen and would like to attend this Town Hall, please RSVP to the ACS Unit at [acsnd@state.gov](mailto:acsnd@state.gov) or call at 011-2419-0110. Please be advised that all American citizens will be required to bring a valid U.S. Passport. If you are the parent of an American citizen child, please make sure your child brings a U.S. Passport and that you have valid photo identification.

### **FVAP Voting Workshop on Friday, May 11<sup>th</sup>**

The [Federal Voting Assistance Program \(FVAP\)](#) is scheduled to conduct a Voting Assistance Workshop at the Embassy, New Delhi to be held on Friday, May 11, 2012. The workshop will be oriented towards American citizen groups and organizations, including wardens who want to learn more about voting in U.S. elections while overseas. It is an interactive session that will last approximately two hours and provide useful voting information, resources, and tools for participating in the U.S. electoral process. FVAP will provide various voting materials, including the 2012-2013 Voting Assistance Guides and promotional/informational posters.

More information on the time, content, and location will be made available in the coming weeks. At that time we will request RSVPs from those who would like to attend. In the meantime, please contact us if you have questions at [VOTENEWDELHI@state.gov](mailto:VOTENEWDELHI@state.gov).

### **Voting Corner**

Speaking of voting; the 2012 Presidential Primary Elections are well underway. We encourage all U.S. Citizens to register to vote as early as possible. You can print out ballot request forms on line at

[Federal Post Card Application \(FPCA\)](#) or fill out hard copies in the ACS waiting room at the U.S. Embassy. There is also a drop box where we can mail the request form with pre-paid postage.

Voters from these States should visit the [FVAP.gov](#) web portal to register and request their absentee ballot for the March, April, and May 2012 Presidential Preference Primary (P) and State Primary (S) elections listed below:

*April*

April 3: District of Columbia (P,S), Maryland (P,S), Texas (P,S), Wisconsin (P)

April 24: Alabama (Primary Runoff), Connecticut (P), Delaware (P), New York (P), Pennsylvania (P,S), Rhode Island (P)

*May*

May 8: Indiana (P,S), North Carolina (P,S), West Virginia (P,S)

May 15: Idaho (P,S), Nebraska (P,S), Oregon (P,S)

May 22: Arkansas (P,S), Kentucky (P,S), Texas (Primary Runoff)

Go to [FVAP.gov](#) and get started! It only takes a few minutes! All citizens residing outside the U.S. who are residents from these States should submit an FPCA for these elections by going to the [FVAP.gov](#) web portal or by following the instructions in the [Voting Assistance Guide](#).

For more information and resources see the U.S. Embassy website at:

<http://newdelhi.usembassy.gov/service/other-citizen-services/voter-registration2.html>

## **Tax Corner**

It's Tax Season again! Are you prepared to file your 2011 tax returns? Everything you need can be found at the [IRS homepage](#). Download forms and instructions, or file your return online with e-filing if you qualify. We also have hard copy forms and booklets in the ACS waiting room at the U.S. Embassy.

Even tax returns with a foreign address can be e-filed! A reader reported to the embassy that he was unable to e-file last year. However, we have been told that this year there should be no issues. If you were unable to file electronically from overseas last year, please try again this year.

Refer to [Publication 54](#), Tax Guide for U.S. Citizens and Resident Aliens Abroad, for more information for overseas filers. For all the latest tips and answers to your tax related questions, visit [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

The IRS now requires you to report **foreign assets** or **foreign account information** by using Form [8938](#) (Statement of Specified Foreign Financial Assets). Significant penalties may apply for those failing to comply. More information is available at: <http://www.irs.gov/businesses/corporations/article/0,,id=23666>.

NOTE: If you receive income or pay expenses in a foreign currency, you must translate foreign currency into U.S. dollars. A link to yearly average currency exchange rates can be found [online here](#).

## **Children's Passport Issuance Alert Program**

The Children's Passport Issuance Alert Program (CPIAP) is one of the State Department's most important tools for preventing international parental child abduction. The program allows parents to register their U.S. citizen children under the age of 18 in the Department's Passport Lookout System.

If a passport application is submitted for a child who is registered in CPIAP, the Department contacts and alerts the parent or parents. The passport lookout system gives all U.S. passport agencies as well as U.S. embassies and consulates abroad an alert on a child's name if a parent or guardian registers an objection to passport issuance for his or her child.

This procedure provides parents advance warning of possible plans for international travel with the child. For more information please [click on this link](#).

## **Disaster Preparedness**

Even when you are in the safety of your home, natural disasters can strike. Earthquakes, hurricanes and tsunamis are only some of the natural disasters threatening the safety of Americans abroad. When natural disasters occur abroad, the Department of State and U.S. embassies and consulates in the affected country stand ready around the clock to track and assist affected American citizens. Visit the following websites to learn more about how to prepare for natural disasters:

- Are You Ready? Guide – <http://www.ready.gov/are-you-ready-guide>
- Disaster Assistance – <http://www.disasterassistance.gov/>
- CDC Emergency Preparedness – <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/index.asp>
- NASA Disaster Reference – <http://gcmd.nasa.gov/Resources/pointers/hazards.html>
- FEMA Disaster Preparedness – <http://www.fema.gov/plan/index.shtm>
- FEMA Disaster Information – <http://www.fema.gov/hazard/index.shtm>

Visit the following websites to stay informed and stay safe AFTER a disaster:

- CDC Response, Cleanup & Safety – <http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/workers.asp>
- ReliefWeb – <http://reliefweb.int/>
- International Association of Emergency Managers – <http://www.iaem.com/>
- UNHCR – <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home>
- FEMA Bereavement and Loss – <http://www.fema.gov/rebuild/recover/bereave.shtm>

## **Upcoming Holidays and ACS Office Closures**

The U.S. Embassy in New Delhi will be closed on the following Indian and U.S. holidays from March through May 2012:

Good Friday	Friday, April 6
Memorial Day	Monday, May 28

A full list of holiday closings is available at: <http://newdelhi.usembassy.gov/service/appointment-and-contact-info/closure-dates-and-holidays.html>

## **STEP: Smart Traveler Enrollment Program**

We encourage you to sign up for the U.S. State Department's free [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#) (formerly known as "Travel Registration" or "Registration with Embassies").

The Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) is a free service provided by the U.S. Government to U.S. citizens who are traveling to, or living in, a foreign country. STEP allows you to enter information about your upcoming trip abroad so that U.S. embassies and consulates can better assist you in an

emergency, including situations where your family or friends in the U.S. are having problems trying to contact you with important news. When you sign up, you will automatically receive the most current information embassies compile about the country where you will be traveling or living. You will also receive any applicable Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts.

### **Leaving India?**

If you are departing from India after a long stay here, and you formally registered your stay with the Embassy or closest U.S. consulate, please be sure to "cancel" your registration when you leave. You can deregister yourself by visiting the [travelregistration.state.gov](http://travelregistration.state.gov) site. You may also want to consider unsubscribing from the newsletter mailing list. Please see the instructions on how to accomplish this below.

### **Contact Us**

*American Citizen Services*  
Shantipath, Chanakyapuri  
New Delhi 110021, India  
Tel: 91-11-2419-8000  
Fax: 91-11-2419-8407  
<http://newdelhi.usembassy.gov/service.html>

The Consular Section in New Delhi serves Americans in the Delhi Capital Region, Chandigarh, Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and the Kingdom of Bhutan.

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